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PRONI PARTY PACKS PIX, PLUNKS, PANTOMIME IN PRIMO PACKAGE

H'wood Unhappy With HBO Pitch For VCR Taping

Hollywood, Dec. 24. Home Box Office has launched a marketing program to tout the compatibility of feevee and VCRs, and included in it is a brochure that directly addresses the previously taboo subject of using feevee and a VCR to build a "video library."

The campaign will probably do nothing to enhance HBO's sometimes-rocky relationship with Hollywood, if initial reactions from showbiz execs are any indication.

Bob Klingensmith, exec v.p. of video distribution for Paramount Pictures' tv-video wing, commented, "Of course this is absolutely counter to our whole philosophy and what we're trying to do. Beyond that, I've never seen any legis-

(Continued on page 60)

Florida Voters To Have A Say In '86 On Legal Gambling

By JACK ZINK

Miami, Dec. 24.

It now appears certain that Florida voters will face the casino gambling issue on next November's ballot. As of Dec. 1, a total of 327,139 registered voter signatures on petitions had been validated by election officials, just 15,800 short of the needed total.

Citizens for Jobs and Tourism, Inc., which is circulating the petitions around the state, has until July to gather the remainder.

Group chairman Andrew Rubin, a Miami area attorney, believes

(Continued on page 60)

Stevie Wonder Rejects White House Invitation For Keys To Motown

Detroit, Dec. 24.

Stevie Wonder turned down a White House invitation and instead returned to Motown to accept a key to the city and a citation for his public service music video "Don't Drive Drunk."

The five-minute video and 30- and 60-second commercials have aired on more than 800 television

(Continued on page 60)

FANS FIND FUN, FORGET FREEZE

Chicago, Dec. 24. Has the reality of the tv business finally caught up with the fantasy femme lib portrayed on the tube? Are women beginning to vote with their rating meters for a greater femme presence at the news anchor desk? These are some of the larger questions beginning to emerge from the first analysis of the November sweeps.

In Chicago, for instance, there is growing body of convincing evidence that Windy City women will, given a clear choice, opt for a newscast in which a woman plays a prominent role, preferably as an anchor or coanchor.

That is one of several intriguing aspects to surface from the just-released demographic breakdowns of the November sweeps books, breakouts the stations and advertisers consider more critical than the highly touted gross rating points and shares released earlier this month (Variety, Dec. 4.).

This femme rejection of womenless news is particularly noticeable at WBBM-TV. The CBS station loyally held onto the ill-fated "America" until last week, and in the process saw its young-femme figures plummet by about half. In

previous environments, WBBM-TV would have bounced back in its 5 p.m. news with Walter Jacobson at the helm.

This new environment shows Jacobson, who dropped three rating points and four share points from a year ago in NSI, dropping from 108,000 women 18-49 last year to 65,000 this year. The story is the same for women 25-54, where that crucial demo has slipped from 125,000 to 76,000.

The story is only slightly better when Bill Kurtis and Don Craig come on at 6 p.m., and at 10 p.m. (Continued on page 60)

Videodisk Sales Beat Out Tape In Japan Mkt.

By JAMES MELANSON

Total sales of prerecorded videocassettes and disks in Japan for the first six months this year amounted to \$4.7-billion yen (\$218,884,000), according to the Japan Video Assn.

Forty member companies reported sales for the six-month period, said the JVA, nine more than the previous six-month period when sales for both configurations totaled \$2.2-billion yen (\$209,000,000). During the first half of 1984 30 companies had reported combined sales of 30.6-billion yen (\$122,539,000).

While the yen has grown stronger during the second half of '85, figures here reflect the exchange rate of 250 yen to a dollar that was common.

(Continued on page 28)

Electronic Subtitles Invented By Prez Of Florence Fest

Florence, Dec. 24.

An electronic subtitling system that could provide an alternative to the burned-in subtitles and simultaneous translations offered at film festivals was on display at the Florence Film Festival Dec. 12-16.

Lines appear in red letters outside the picture area, either just below or just above the frame, on a computer-controlled display screen of the kind familiar in sports.

Display can accommodate two lines of dialog at a time and will be available in three sizes for screens in

(Continued on page 60)

Hub Blasphemy Beef Dismissed By Judge; 'Hail Mary' Continues

Boston, Dec. 24.

Orson Welles Cinema will continue to show "Hail Mary" through the holidays after Judge Charles Grabau dismissed contentions that the film violates the state's 1657 blasphemy statutes in Middlesex Superior Court. Wednesday (18) he decided to reconsider an earlier decision to allow the film to be shown.

The film, which was given up in

(Continued on page 60)

APPA TECH

39

January 1986

APA-TECH # 39

The 555 Times # 39

The Amateur Press Association by and for the
members of General Technics (more or less)

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The Next Deadline is Wednesday, April 1st, 1986

The copy count is 30. Minac is two pages every other mailing.

YOUR ACCOUNT BEFORE POSTAGE IS \$ 4.98

Members Added - Alice Bentley

Members Dropped - Nobody

Those Who Owe Money - Nikki, Guy C., Rolf

Those Who Should Postmail - Andy, Nikki, Alice, Hugh, Al, John, Sheila,
Jamie, Bill, Tullio, Dick, Linda, Kiran, RolfThose Who Should Contribute Next Ish - Guy C., Valli, Dave, Eric, Greg,
Dean, Roxanne, Guy W.

Cons We'll Be At Before Next Deadline - Confusion (1-24-86) plymoth, MI -

Capricon (2-28-86) Lincolnwood, IL - Minicon (3-28-86) Minneapolis, MN

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

OK, I know I said this would stay on schedule - but I also said that January first would be my hardest deadline, and so it has been. Between returning from Florida where we spend the holidays, preparing ourselves for Ishercon, and then recovering from having our fifty closest friends over for five days, well, Apa-Tech kinda got shoved to the back burner. It's gotten so late (I type this on the 18th), that I've decided I'll pass this out to those people who make it to Confusion. I'll try to get this back on track in April. Also starting in April - by popular vote we'll be going back to a deadline of 2 months instead of 3.

For those of you who've asked - Renee & Marty have become a single entity in terms of the apa. They think that between the two of them they'll be able to make minac. And since Marty wrote a contribution for this issue, maybe they're right. Tullio and I are still seperate, but that may change since he hasn't been writing anything. I'll let you know (seperate lines on the roster means seperate accounts).

Well, last issue I received 3 zines after the deadline. Roxanne called on the first and said she had just finished her zine - did I want it, or should she keep it till next issue? Since I was planning on passing them out at Windycon, I told her to go ahead and send it and I would add it on. Then on the second I received Guy's contribution, and on the fourth, Rolf's. If I have your zine when I collate, it'll go in the current issue - if it comes after the apa is together, I'll keep it for the next issue unless you ask me to postmail for you (which is what happened with Dave's zine - I got it the day after I had mailed out the August issue, so it became the first contribution for the October issue. I really do want to keep this coming out on schedule, so please try to make sure you send me your contributions early enough to make the deadline - that way all the news will still be current instead of three months out of date.

GTB

RAMBLING FROM THE MED

Greetings people that I do not know.

My name is Eric Roman Nash. However, being in the navy I am more often referred to as PNSA Nash, which stands for personellman seaman apprentice. The ship I'm stationed on is ported in a small meaningless island called Santo Stefano. This island is less than a mile from the island of Sardegna, which is renowned for its cork factories and a port where a scene from a James Bond movie was filmed. I've recently come back from the French Riviera. I looked all over Monaco, but couldn't find Princess Stephanie. I had to settle on just seeing Grace Kelly's tomb. I got kicked out of a casino in Monte Carlo for being too young, but I won 5 francs. The highlight of the trip was the McDonald's in Nyce.

My experience in conventions is quite limited. I have only been to one. If I had the chance I would go to more. I don't read much science fiction but its next to impossible to pry me away from a TV when "Star Trek" or "Doctor Who" is on. I read in "Apa Tech" a few issues ago where someone, whose name I can't remember, had written an article for "Comic BookBuyers Guide". Well I'm a collector of comic books. I have somewhere around 500 comics. Their mostly DC and Marvel. My favorite titles are "The Legion of Superheroes" and "The Teen Titans". Is anyone reading "Crisis Infinite Earths"?

Well this is enough rambling from the Med. For now.

ERIC ROMAN NASH

Bonnie Jones
129 Burcham #1
East Lansing, MI 48823

Well, its the beginning of a new year, which makes me think of years past. GT has existed for ten years now, slightly less than my time in fandom. I remember when it first started, Alice Insley invited me to join, but being a neo and painfully shy, I decided to wait and see. After being in and out of fandom a couple of times, I joined GT when I discovered that just about everybody I knew and respected in fandom was a member.

I have a feeling that this is the end of an era, and consequently, the beginning of a new one, what with Bill Higgins and Barry Gehm getting new cars, Sheila cutting off her red hair and Alice joining a health club, not to mention all the weddings that have taken place in the last couple of years. It seems that the GT'ers are growing up and becoming respectable and in some cases, respected members of society. Well, I just hope that the next ten years brings happiness and prosperity to the members of GT and this APA.

Now perhaps you can help me with something. Being a student, I have neither the time or the money to buy a lot of science magazines but I want to keep up on the world of science. So, I an taking an opinion poll to find out the best science magazine for the money. Something that will cover a wide range of topics without being so technical that I need a PhD in the topic to understand the articles. So, please give me your opinions. Thank you.

This being the new year, one of my resolutions was to change the title of my apa. So I have given it a new title which is really an old movie but what can you expect from a finite primate sitting at a finite typewriter.

Happy New Year!

Bonnie

Sam Paris

Entropy As A Liberal Art

Special axe grinding issue.

Head for the hills folks, the collapse of Western Civilisation is nigh.

This semester I've been a tutor for the kiddie level "general educational requirements" physics courses here at Northeastern Ill. U.. I've tutored freshman and sophomore physics for a few years, so I expected a fair number of people with mental blocks about the subject. I never expected to see people who couldn't read or use a ruler.

That's what I said, one of my students couldn't measure distances with a ruler.

She got the idea fairly quickly, and seemed quite tickled with her new found skill, so I guess I have to believe her claim that no one ever showed her before.

At least she could read, after a fashion. She was able to ask decent questions, and I believe she passed the course with a "C". Many of her classmates weren't so lucky.

Many of them could pronounce a word correctly, most of the time. They couldn't however, read a paragraph and then explain it's content to me. They seemed to be guessing the words, rather than reading. This guessing game seemed to take all of their attention, leaving none for getting the meaning of the text. They learned what they learned in lecture or from me and nowhere else.

This in itself is worrisome, but as Northeastern seems to have a warm body admissions policy, not enough to justify that inflammatory first sentence. But if Rudolf Flesch's book, "Why Johnny Still Can't Read" is to be believed, the majority of the U.S. population is in the same boat. Unfortunately, the people in charge of finding a solution are part of the problem! My own experiences bear this out.

This is going to require a bit of background. I started to work as a tutor this semester for Title Three, a group here at Northeastern armed with a grant and given the mission of reducing the high dropout rate. The part of the group I worked for was headed by a woman with a masters in Early Childhood Education, and an almost total inability to speak english. She used educationese instead. Educationese sounds like english, but is designed to impress rather than convey ideas. For example, I did not tutor, I presided over "Cognitive Enhancement Mediation Sessions". (This is a

direct quote from our guidebook, I did not make up this phrase or any of the others I will quote.)

Our guidebook... our boss wrote a twelve page guidebook for us to study and use on the job. It starts with a table of organization for the "Tutorial Center" (no I don't know why she didn't call it the Cognitive Enhancement Center) starting with the dean and ending with the tutees and tutors. This is actually more useful than it may sound, since it did give us a clear idea of the program's priorities. (Students on the bottom...) Five pages of pure jargon follow this nonsense. For example, under "Goals and Objectives" she takes an entire page to say that we are to help students who have problems, and let the instructors know about any problems we see. Later, we are exhorted to "...mediate the learning experience by: ... Utilizing bridging techniques ... reducing impulsivity in behavior through direct focusing ... develop thinking strategies ...", and so on ad nauseum. The rest of the handbook is taken up by copies of the various forms we were to fill out.

One more more jargon generator in a bureaucracy is scary only because my boss HAS A DEGREE IN EDUCATION. She should be expert at imparting ideas. Worse, Northeastern is a big teacher factory. The education department has won awards. Yet education students I've talked to claim that it is necessary to spout this garbage back at the instructors if you want to get your teaching certificate. Education students spend so much time learning jargon that they have no time to take courses outside of their major. So the people in charge of teaching children are, by and large narrow specialists in a discipline that appears more interested in mystification than in results.

Strong words? The decline in education in the U.S. seems to have paralleled the rise of these "High Priests" of education. Don't take my word for it, do some reading. Rudolf Flesch's book " Why Johnny Can't Read" gives a terrifying look at how reading is being mistaught. Steven Jay Gould's "the Mismeasure of Man" shows how supposedly scientific tests of tests of intelligence were abused in the past. The book I mentioned above, "Why Johnny Still Can't Read" gives examples of how such tests are still being misused.

Flesch's books keep contrasting the teaching of reading by phonics and by what is called the "look and say", "whole word" or (the the jargon gets very slippery here) "psycholinguistics". Look and say treats english text as pictographs. Little time is spent teaching the sounds of letters. Instead children are simply told to memorise words. They are encouraged to guess rather than to sound out an unfamiliar word. Dr. Flesch gives this example from an EIGHTH GRADE text:

Context: "The car began to roll down the hill. Thinking quickly, Sally jumped into the car and put her

foot on the brake.

The children are asked how they know that the last word is not pedal or broom. By eighth grade look and say students are still expected to have trouble distinguishing such disparate words.

Phonics students on the other hand, are expected to be able to read just about any english word by third grade. Flesch gives many examples of schools and school systems where all of the children can read well.

The reading I've done so far has only covered the teaching of reading. My experience suggests that there must be something wrong with the teaching of mathematics as well. Too many of my students can't do arithmetic, much less simple algebra. At least some of them are capable of such work, since I was able to teach them to solve simple problems after a few hours work. If I could do it in a few hours, why couldn't the schools do it in 12 years?

I don't know what to do about this problem except complain about it to as many people as I can. Education seems to be a closed shop. Maybe if enough people know about the problem, and refuse to send their children to look and say schools market forces will bring about a change. There are schools where phonics is taught first. The Montessori schools are springing up all over, they seem to be doing something right. I've never tried, but I'm told that they welcome visitors, apparently feeling that such visits are their best sales tool.

My goodness, this is the longest submission Ive ever written, and its all on one subject. I'm afraid I've no time left for mailing comments. Next time I'll try to be a bit less monomaniacal.

APA-TECH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: BARRY D. GEHM

AGE: 30

ADDRESS: 129 Burcham Apt 10
East Lansing, MI 48823

TODAY'S DATE: couldn't get one

SEX: not recently (see above)

RELATED EXPERIENCE:

present - 1977 occasional contributor to Pyro Technics
1978 - member of AZAPA
1977 - editor of GREASY KID STF
1974 - tooth drilled without anesthesia

CREDIT HISTORY: In the Middle Ages, Christians were forbidden by the Church to loan money for interest ("usury"), so the lending of capital became the province of the Jewish minority...
(Is this what you want? I don't think I understand the question.)

REASONS FOR JOINING: I thought it would help me keep in touch with some of my friends, like Nikki Ballard, who never writes me, and Bonnie Jones, who never tells me anything, and Bill Higgins, who and whose whole/e are never home.

Also, I heard you were desperate.

REFERENCES (list 4): 1. The Oxford English Dictionary
2. The New Columbia Encyclopedia
3. The CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics 63rd ed.
4. Bartlett's Familiar Quotations 15th edition.

Under penalties of perfidy, I hereby agree to keep quiet, do as I'm told, sit in the back, not make trouble, chew with my mouth closed and pub like mad.

Barry D Gehm
signature

Do not write below this line.

Interviewer comments:

GT: Are we really this desperate?

☒ Approved

☐ Disapproved

GTB

HELLO, I MUST BE GOING...

a deadline-zine for APA-TECH from
Barry Gehm
129 Burcham Apt 10
East Lansing, MI 48823

This is being written a few hours before deadline (i.e. midnight, January 1st, 1986). I'm even at the House of Isher so I can give it to the OE directly. It has been a very frantic December and so I am afraid I have not had time to come up with much original material. Hopefully I will be able to write more next time. For now, on to the mailing comments...

APA-TECH # 37

ROD "TRANSPORTER" SMITH: Doom Patrol! Hey, I remember them! Good stuff as I recall it--sort of DC's answer to the X-Men. Or did DP come first? There was even a guy in a wheelchair. Keep us posted on your article.

You're right, boredom is better than bombs.

Congratulations and respect on achieving Nidon.

I wish I could find a bumper-sticker that says "One more gun-owner for fun control," except I don't know about the "more." I don't want guns banned, but I would like to make them, especially handguns, much harder to get. I'm not sure that it can be done by legislation, though. However, though I may not agree with what you say, I will defend ~~to the death~~ your right to say it in APA-TECH. A good controversy could be just what we need.

ROXANNE "RAVINGS" SHIELDS: Nice to see you at Ishercon. Being familiar with the cultural sterility of much small-town existence, I was pleased to read about your horizon-expanding counselling work.

DONNA "PARENTS" PRONI: No comments, talked out at Ishercon.

APA-TECH # 38

DAVE "LASERGRAM" LEVINE: I never know what to say in response to real tragedy. Sorry for your loss. Glad to hear from you again.

ROD "TRANSPORTER" SMITH: Rae bnc.

VALLI "GONZO" HOSKI: I don't know if we sang "Benson, Arizona" softly but we sang it with studied nonchalance as the cops drove past and looked at the smoking remains of our truly impressive fireworks display, courtesy Mark Hyde. Eventually they drove on.

DONNA "EASY" PRONI: (sorry, I couldn't resist) The restructuring of GT doesn't seem to have proceeded very rapidly so far. More on the evils of procrastination in my next zine...

BONNIE "CHINESE WATCH" JONES: So that's where you were this summer! I wondered why you didn't ask to go grocery shopping all summer.

ROXANNE "GREAT WHITE" SHIELDS: Learning to fly? Neat! Envy! Good luck!

GUY "AMORPHOUS" WICKER: It seems silly to write you a mailing comment when you are looking over my shoulder as I type this. So rae bnc.

ROLF "HOUSES" WILSON: Congratulations on the house. May it see you through a happy thirty years.

GREG "ANOMALOUS" RUFFA: You know, of course, that "pony" does not describe a young norse.

Your comments on worrying about Shuttle solid-rocket misfires exactly parallel remarks I have heard from Jim Loudon. He also points out the further hazard of what happens if they don't burn out at exactly (i.e. within a very small interval) the same time. According to Jim, the boosters are the mosthazardous aspect of the whole system.

Back to
grad school--with luck I'll be getting out about the time you get in.
Still waiting for Pyro (like Godot).

GUY "EQUATORIAL" CONSOLMAGNO: (sometimes known around here as "the other Guy") The teaching post at taht college soulds just like the kind of thing I've often thought would suit me--I'm a better teacher than researcher (I think). Are jobs like that really out there?

*** SPECIAL PRESCIENT MAILING COMMENT TO APA-TECH # 39 ***

BONNIE "WONDERFUL" (?) JONES: Science News. And "a finite primate sitting at a finite typewriter" is a better title than the one you're using.

Stuck in Kalamazoo

by: Guy Wicker

It is January 2 and Tullio and Donna have promised me that Ishercon will not end until I leave. This has possibilities. If I can get the Institute to send me my computer i could work by mail. The house next door is up for sale. Maybe I'll never have my car fixed. This all started a few weeks back when I figured that a huge cheap car would be more cost effective, more reliable, and have more utility than a more expensive "economy" car. Taking this line of reasoning to the limit, i purchased a 76 Lincon Town Car. It still has a few bugs in it, but I'm not in a hurry to go.

Ishercon is a lot of fun this year. Noone was arrested yet despite the 5 police cars we summoned to usher in the new year. Lotsa big fireworks. Gaming was the big activity this year. 7 computers and a variety of boardgames received much attention. Movies, charades, filking and shopping sprees occurred. Blimp science didn't make any great strides forward, though lots of work went into a rigid structure that may be seen at Capricon. Mark Hyde brought the best Star Sculpture ever; four colors! The two of us are going to make an attempt to make them available in the low hundreds price range, compared to the 1.5 to 4 thousand price they currently sell for. All in all, Ishercon 8 is a really fun con. Stop by sometime.

Amorphous research is progressing nonuniformly. There is a lot to be done when you are trying to usurp a major portion of the semiconductor industry. Things look pretty stable for the long haul, though. The European High Tech Consortium has chosen Amorphous Semiconductors as one of the ten critical research projects to establish European hi-tech leadership. This has called a lot of attention to Energy Conversion Devices' role in the existence of amorphous semiconductors by lots of U. S. investors. I'm having fun there.

This is being typed on Isher's apple ii just before the deadline. I always wait until the last minute to get these things in. Donna is a big incentive. "Here Guy, sit at my computer and type your submission", she said. Well, here it is, Donna. I hate your word processor.

- Guy

TRANSPORTER TOPICS

Rodford E. Smith
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Frankfort, Ky. 40601
(502) 227-7741

This is embarasing. I had finished my contribution (late) and was getting it together for copying when I realised that I couldn't find the first page. I have looked at home and at work, high and low, to no avail. So, I am retyping it. Just keep in mind that this first page is being typed after the rest.

Donna: I'm sorry this is late. I had planned to get it done over the holidays, then came down with a cold. More and sooner next time, I promise.

Laser Dave: Welcome back! See below about my (almost) new job.

Dr. Gonzo: You got rid of two cats, and I have aquired another one. A five-week old kitten showed up on my front porch early one Sunday back in October. My older cat has adopted him. I do not let either of my cats in the bedroom at night. The older one likes to sleep on my face. The younger one is better mannered but if I keep the door closed so the older one can't get in the kitten can't get out to use the litter box. By the way, six pages filled two-thirds, is only four pages. Don't cheat.

Donna II: "Decaying orbit." He ought to be blown up for a pun like that! Ideally, martial artists should train every day of their lives. You may remember the techniques but not how to do them if you do nothing, or remember how to do them but not be able to if you study but don't work out. I have a tendency to coast between tests, which we have every six months, but try to get in at least three days a week in addition to the two class days. I have a friend who is interested in Karate but who is not currently in a class. He used to come by on Sunday afternoon to work out with me; unfortunately he has developed Carpal Tunnel Syndrome in both hands and can't do anything strenuous with them. He is continuing the stretching exercises and as much of the calsthenics as he can.

Bonnie: Sounds like an interesting summer job. I think that maps are fascinating. I had a course in 'Photogrammetry during college, which really only touched on the surface. Topographical maps contain an amazing amount of information. Classified maps are even more fun! The Cartographic Section for the Commonwealth of Kentucky is in our division. See below for more on that. They do the work the old-fashioned way, by hand from photographs. I have seen the stunt flying movie at the Air and Space Museum and would ceratinly like to see the Shuttle movie.

Roxanne: I remember seeing that program on analysing animal sounds now.

Guy: For something cheap which would be noticeable in orbit howabout duplicating the old Echo sattelite? All you need is some sort of aluminised mylar reflector which can be inflated, with maybe a low-power radio beacon which you can hear once you know which way to point your antenna. Estes engines are black powder, if I recall correctly.

Rolf: A friend of mine manages the IBM system at the University of Kentucky Medical Center and he has told stories about the Halon fire-extinguishing system there. The jets make so much noise they can actually damage your hearing, so there are several pause buttons located around the room. If the alarm sounds you have *a few* seconds to reach one before the gas comes out. You hold the button in while someone checks to see if there is actually a fire. If so you realease the button and run. After suffering high heating bills last winter I decided to take some steps this year. I closed off the back bedroom, caulked the windows and had the water heater flame turned down. My first bill of(see next page).....

the winter^{ya 5} based on previous use. I read the meter the second month, and the actual reading was so much lower than what they had expected that they gave me \$50 credit.

Greg: Sounds like interesting work with interesting times ahead. Are any of you working on the sortie vehicle? Okay, so rocketry is dangerous. Lets come up with a better way of getting into space. We don't even need new physics, just better engineering. What happened to Pyro? #37 was supposed (it says here) to be out by now. Oh, well, we still have a week left in the year and you gave yourself 'till New Year's, so maybe it will get here. My computer friend (see above) tested a pre-production model of the Amiga he borrowed from a friend who runs a computer store, then bought himself one for an early Christmas present. It is impressive! A micro with multiple processors and time sharing. I've played "Hacker" on it a couple of times, hope to do it some more.

Guy: Welcome back to the real world. By the way, I did send a box of old Astronomy magazines. I ment to send more, but got behind in other things. Guess it's a good thing I'm such a procrastinator, or I might have lost more.

Whew! I have been having a battle royal (actually, it's an IBM) with this typewriter. First it ran out of correction tape (which I use a lot of), then it mangled the ribbon, then it threw the correction tape off it's track. Everything seems to be working now.

BITS AND PIECES

The odor of new-mown grass comes from the compound cis-3-hexenol.

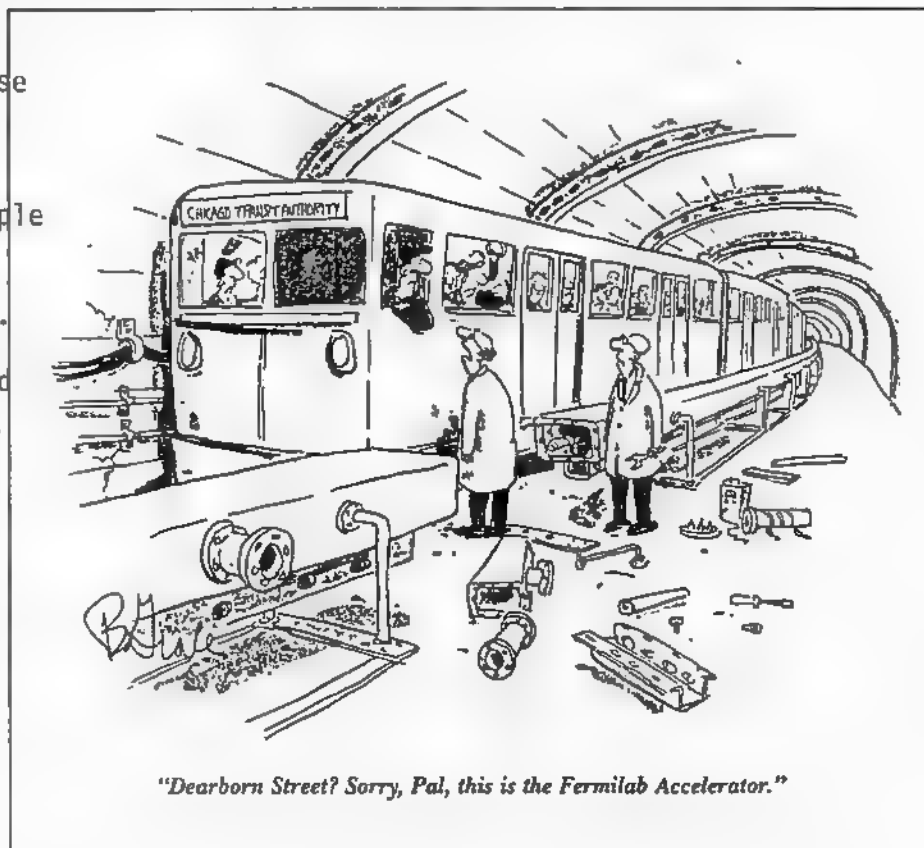
I recieve some strangely addressed mail occasionally. The other day I got a letter for a Mr. R. S. Mith. Never heard of him.

Coke and Pepsi both sent specially designed cans for their products along on a recent Shuttle mission (51-F). There was no desire on the part of any of the crew to finish the cans of either product.

MY NEW JOB THAT WASN'T

I had been out of the office for a week-long course in the new Highway Capacity Manual. We got out early the final day, and I went into the office for the few hours left. The division director stopped by and said he was looking for volunteers to work second or third shift on a map digitisation project. Since second shift meant a raise of 10% for the duration of the project and I am an evening person anyway I eagerly said yes. Since they needed two people for the project and only one other wanted to work another shift I was sure of getting it. One of the guys I went to the training course with complained that no one had asked him if he wanted to have this raise, but he had gone home after the class got out and they needed the answer that Friday, so I just told him that he wasn't there to be asked.

The two of us who had agreed to this project started training on the big machine over in the main building. We both agreed that it was a



wonderful machine for what it was designed to do. Unfortunately, it was not intended to digitise maps! It was a design tool with a limited digitisation function through a mouse and a special program package. We found that it was almost impossible to follow the lines properly with the crosshair sight the mouse had, and the program package was not quite what we needed for the job we were training for. Also, there were a lot of software problems. Still, the work could be done. We continued training and waited for the paperwork from personnel formalising our job change. And kept waiting.

The date when we were supposed to start our new schedual came and went with no word from the Department of Personnel. We still haven't heard anything. Apparently, our comments on the unsuitability of the machine had reached someone who had decided to quietly let the project die. *It seems that* someone had had a big idea about modernising the cartographic section, which is in our division. Since it would be several years before we could get a machine here for the cartographers to use in making new maps it was decided to digitise existing ones using existing equipment. Like I said, though, nothing came of it except a waste of time and effort on the part of the two of us.

OOPS!

Due to the holidays (not to mention falling down two different flights of steps on two different days and getting a bad cold) this is already late. Therefore, I will make comments on Dean Anton Sherwood's postmailing and then try to get this mailed off tomorrowwww, Jan. 7. *(Late flash: it is going out Jan. 10.)* Dean: I decided that future humanity would just use an arbitrary calender. It would be made up of exactly 365 days of exactly 24 hours each. Locals might still have a special calendar for their world, but everyone would know how to convert from their year to the Arbitrary Year.

And as a final treat two more bits of franked material. You need to know a little something about reloading amunition to get the full humor of the last page, but I think that most of it will come through to everyone.

Hypersonic Transport Development Phases Outlined at Congressional Aviation Forum

Washington—Development of a hypersonic aircraft capable of operating in low orbit involves a three-phase program on which \$20 million has already been spent by government and industry, the Congressional Aviation Forum was told last week.

The program is being studied by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, and industry is being surveyed for interest and potential participation in the program (AW&ST Oct. 10, p. 33).

In addition, George Keyworth, 2nd, President Reagan's science advisor, said the President will be briefed on the program on his return from the U.S./USSR summit. Keyworth said the Office of Management and Budget already has been briefed.

Aerospace is a national scientific goal, Keyworth said, and work now under way could lead to a transatmospheric vehicle by the end of this century. Keyworth stressed that the program, as now envisaged, utilizes technology that is state-of-the-art in scramjet/ramjet engines, lightweight materials, computer aerodynamics and fly-by-wire. "We are on the verge of a technological revolution, not evolution," Keyworth said.

There are risk areas and the costs will be extensive, according to James A. Tegnalia, acting director of DARPA, who said, "The only way to get the answer on costs is to take the first step, to see if we can achieve the objective before a large commitment in aircraft is made."

Tegnalia said studies will center on two flight regimes, Mach 4 and Mach 8, using air-breathing engines on an aircraft that would fly from Los Angeles to Tokyo in 2 hr. From a military standpoint, the vehicle is of interest to the Defense Dept. because of the capability to intercept Soviet Backfire and Blackjack bombers over the North Sea in 30 min.

DARPA is looking at a hydrogen-powered aircraft capable of speeds of Mach 12 at 15,000-200,000 ft. and at Mach 26 at the fringe of the atmosphere, 350,000 ft. or higher. Technology in carbon-carbon materials is now available, wind tunnel tests at Mach 10 have been made with scramjets and fuselage forebody tests at Mach 17 make the project look feasible, he said.

The program calls for engine/airframe evaluation in Fiscal 1987 and 1988, with a flight vehicle constructed in Fiscal 1989-92 and flight testing between Fiscal 1992-95. Costs in the second phase would be as

high as \$500 million, rising to \$2-3 billion for the third phase.

A methane-fueled transport, the Mach 5 Orient Express, would derive much of its technology from DARPA's Aerospaceplane concept. Aerojet currently is working on its Airturboramjet cryogenic methane powerplant.

Congressmen were told by Raymond S. Colladay, NASA deputy associate administrator for aeronautics and space technology, that "there must be no misunderstanding—this will be the most complex vehicle ever built."

Colladay listed challenges including:

- Air-breathing engines with severe requirements for good performance and that will require large frontal intake areas to scoop large amounts of air and still be low-drag designs.

- Engine structures that will operate at temperatures as high as 2,000F and even 5,000F in some regimes.

- Huge tanks for hydrogen and a complex airframe/engine integration both fore and aft.

A memorandum of understanding is being worked out between the Defense Dept. and NASA. The cost split on future research would be about 80% Defense Dept. and 20% NASA. □

XP .04-50

ED HALL

A Wildcat for the Space Age

THE COMING OF a new cartridge causes only a mild stir these days because all the new ones seem to do no more than fill a gap between two already well established cartridges. The .25-06, .22-250, and 7mm Magnum are examples. It is very seldom that a radical departure from tradition becomes worthy of praise for any length of time. The time allotted for praise of the following cartridge will be three minutes.

The old adage of over-bore capacity being ignored here, one sees the epitome of the velocity seeker's dream come true. The new and still experimental .04-50 is definitely a departure from the norm. In fact, the designer of its predecessor, the .06-30, has departed also.

The cartridge is formed by necking down a standard .50-caliber machine gun case to accept a common sewing needle of .04 caliber. As you might expect, the design has both merits and drawbacks.

The availability and price of needles in several weights and styles provides for great variety in loading. Unfortunately, the standard spitzer needle is somewhat long (although providing excellent sectional density), and requires the barrel to have a twist rate of 12 turns in 1 inch. Perhaps when there is

sufficient demand for the production of semiwadcutter needles, the twist can be reduced to 10 in 1.

The negative side of all this is that when someone begins selling handguns in this caliber, registration of all needles sold will be required, and we all know what a pain that can be.

Loading this cartridge has presented some problems. Bullseye is the only powder which will readily feed through the neck of the case. A tentative starting load of 237.5 grains behind a 12-grain spitzer boat-tail needle was dropped when estimates indicated the pressure curve for this load would be a long vertical line.

It was then decided that the case could be more easily loaded through the primer flash hole before the primer was seated. This was thought to be no more hazardous than firing the cartridge, and permitted the use of slower, more appropriate powders which could be pushed through the flash hole, one granule at a time, using tweezers.

Loading dies are not available at present, but they are not necessary; so much brass flows forward with each firing, the mouth of the case is nearly closed. Simply use a .0385 x 6-inch hypodermic needle as a combination decapper and neck expander. (A strong decapping rod is not necessary due to

the remarkable ease with which fired primers come out of the case.)

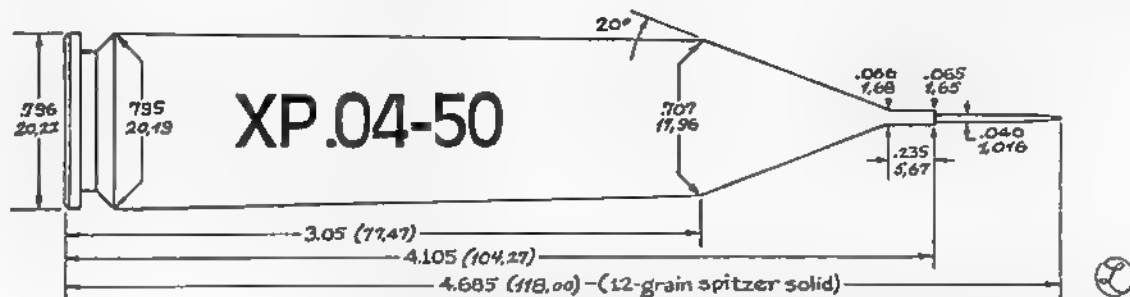
We had difficulty obtaining a barrel of the proper bore diameter and twist. The gunsmith who finally made it was a miserable old cuss, for he demanded payment in full before we even tested it for accuracy.

The barrel was torqued into a machine gun action and glass-bedded to a classic thumbhole stock. With the possible exception of anticipated feeding problems, we were ready for the range.

At the range we had trouble obtaining velocity readings. On the third day — after we had reloaded the cartridge (holding the tweezers was difficult with a sore shoulder), we were successful. We are keeping the velocity classified in case the government might be interested in the project, but we can say that the chronograph screen spacing was 175 yards.

After the sixth day (three shots) we found we had worn out the barrel. We have calculated that these small bore barrels should be cleaned after every half shot.

When we get a new barrel — and they let us out again — we will resume testing. ●



Repeated requests to SAAMI for this wildcat's specifications have proved fruitless, so measurements had to be taken from a fired case. Because the latter was partially melted, dimensions must be regarded as approximate.

INCORRECT THOUGHTS

A 'zine for Apa-Tech by
Marty Franz
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(616) 344-1183

Hello there. It's been a long time since I've contributed to Apa-Tech. I'm not really sure why I'm doing it now-- maybe seeing so many people a few days ago at Isnercon had a positive effect, maybe it's the season (its always nice to visit with your friends at Christmas), or maybe it's just that it has been too long.

When last you heard from me I was freelance programming here in Kalamazoo. Well, one of my clients, Allen Testproducts, made me an offer I couldn't refuse, and I decided to join them this fall as a full-time employee. I had spent every day there since last March anyway, so I wasn't exactly a stranger to the rigors of a "real" job. It's nice to have benefits like hospitalization and insurance again. I also got a free turkey for Christmas, which some may argue is hardly fair since I make Allen pay for theirs.

At Allen. I'm working on a new software product for the IBM PC. Allen makes automobile engine analyzers already, and they plan on getting into the business side of the car repair and service market with this product. Without boring you, I write lots of programs using BetterBASIC on the PC, and also some C and assembler language.

Back in August, Renee, John Frambach and I traveled to Australia and spent a month there. This is truly one of the benefits of self-employment: telling your clients and creditors that you'll be gone for a month and to bother you later. Hard to believe as this sounds, I actually spent the entire time away from computers and software, traveling around Australia and seeing the country I'd only heard about before. If you're interested, we're tentatively scheduled to hold a panel at Capricon where John's numerous slides will be shown. We even have a few funny stories to tell.

Other than that, things are pretty much the same as they always were in Kalamazoo. The house is coming along quite well under Renee's ministrations: we have a nearly remodeled bathroom, new tile and carpeting in various places, and joy of joys, an interior door connecting the first and second floors. No more going out to go up, as they say.

Recently, we've become involved in our local Neighborhood Watch. With the other households on our block we've formed a group to keep an eye on things: suspicious cars, people who don't

belong on our street, etc. The idea is that neighborly vigilance (and following it up with calling the police, even for suspicious activity) cuts down on crime. After you've seen a few burglaries in your neighborhood, you start to become real right-wing about crime. My radical college cronies would be truly appalled at some of the ideas we've discussed at block meetings, including direct harassment of suspicious people ("Can I help you? No? Then get the hell off our block!"). But, they no doubt live today in suburbs far from the problem. And then again, they spent lots of time being appalled at things in college.

Anyway, it's too soon to tell whether or not our Neighborhood Watch is working, but at least we feel like we're doing something, not being couch potatoes watching the evening news and clucking about the crime going on around us. Ask me again 'round summertime how things are going.

Hey, how come much of the sf written lately, you know, sucks? I thought we had a pretty sorry lot of Hugo nominees last year. I liked only The Peace War. There have also been some stinker movies, too. Whatsamatter here? My theory is that the sf movie and publishing empires have been seized by syphilitic morons whose only interest is bucks; my saner friends say I'm only growing old and crotchety.

A recent exception to this is Greg Bear's book Blood Music. It is not only a "good read", it is actually (1) based on an interesting scientific premise (the evolution of an "intelligent plague"... to say more would spoil the story) and (2) populated by characters who are more than just cutouts of Good Scientists and Competent Women. I nominate Blood Music for this year's Hugo, already.

Another excellent book, (but in a completely different vein), is Barry Hughart's Bridge of Birds. It definitely isn't sf; I wouldn't even call it fantasy, because it was quite good and there was nary a changeling or "majick" to be found in it. If you liked The Princess Bride you'll love Bridge of Birds.

Speaking earlier of movies, with the ability to rent video movies our media viewing habits have changed drastically. No more having to choose between "Rocky IV" and "Care Bear Massacre" at the local mall to sate that need for a movie fix on Friday night. Now, we head down to the Believe in Music, rent a tape or two, make some popcorn, guzzle some Coke, and have a great time. It's certainly more of a family affair now, with Steve or Parr dropping over occasionally to yak or make wisecracks. The best thing is being able to take a chance on movies you wouldn't risk \$12 to see at the theatre.

Another activity I'm fond of now is playing a game on the PC called Ancient Art of War. It's basically like having a set of

electronic toy soldiers, with the ability to change the battlefield at any time and no little pieces to get kicked under the sofa. Unlike most shoot-'em-up video games, which require good hand-eye coordination, the AADW requires some thought regarding the condition and tactics of your troops. And unlike the Infocom adventure games (which I enjoy about as much as untangling a ball of string), there's lots of action and graphics. Up until now Avalon-Hill style "conflict simulation" games haven't fared too well on microcomputers; I think the reason is that the anal types that play them miss having little hexes and counters to fool around with. But the AADW is a definite improvement over board games: one key feature is that you don't see the disposition of the enemy unless one of your own squads is nearby, making reconnaissance a critical factor, just like it is in real warfare. Similar features in board games are pretty inconvenient, requiring lots of bookkeeping by both players. I understand there are versions of the game available on the Mac, Commodore 64, and Atari. I definitely recommend it to you gamers.

Well, that's about all for now. Here are some mailing comments:

VALLI Thanks for letting me borrow your Patagonian Express; I am just now finishing it up and will return it to you shortly. Hope you haven't missed it. Having been Down Under, I want to ride the Indian-Pacific someday, which goes from Perth to Sydney and features, among other things, the longest stretch of straight track in the world. // You two were missed at Ishercon. // Renee's relatives live in St. Catherine's, and her uncle operates Lock #5 of the Welland Canal. // Yeah, we found out neutered cats spray too. Funny.

ROD Alex and I stopped at the SAC museum on the way out to Denvention a few years ago. Someone had stuck a small yellow happy face on one of the simulated nuclear warheads on display in the museum part.

ROXANNE Maybe you should fly Flight Simulator before you get in a real plane. About a year ago, I took a demonstration ride in an ultralight. It was very enjoyable, and they are a lot more affordable than "real" planes. Now that most are equipped with ballistic parachutes they are also safer than they used to be. About the only drawbacks are (1) the incredible noise of the engine in flight and (2) their limited range and operating conditions. There are also affordable "real" aircraft like the Moni Motorglider, which combines some of the characteristics of a sailplane (high glide ratio, long wingspan, light construction) with a sport monoplane's powered performance. It's a Real Techie's project:

you send them your \$5000 and a big box of parts shows up. Then you spend a few hundred hours putting it together.

BONNIE Forbidden Zone is definitely a right-brain movie. According to my psychologist friend, the split-brain theory is coming under increasing attack nowadays, (from people on both sides of the argument?) because in people with organic brain damage the brain distributes function anywhere, in either hemisphere, to compensate. My intuition tells me this is probably true, too. // Stats? Yuck. Eight out of ten statistics students go nuts, I read somewhere. // I suppose video games and computers are a way of training people to operate spacecraft, too. And certainly some of the packaged food we eat belongs in a tube or a bag, like Pringles.

DONNA Sure, we can debate gun control in Ape-Tech. I'm definitely in favor of some form of sensible gun control, especially regulating automatic weapons, which as far as I can see are used only to kill people. (Unless you are hunting whole herds of ungulates at once.) Unfortunately, the people who buy and use these weapons are usually so far gone (neo-Nazis, dope smugglers, etc.) that little in the way of polite legislation is going to stop them. We must change the values and orientation of our society before serious gun control will do any good. // About organizing GT: I am naturally suspicious of any form of "organization", especially when we start talking rules, chapters, and treasuries. I think the first step is to try and run a vital, growing Pyro, which can serve as the forum for lots of other activities. If the Real Techies who do the stuff can't communicate their ideas to others through a loose fanzine, then I think a hierarchical regional organization will be even less effective. What's more, the advent of affordable desktop publishing (laser printers, paste-up software) means that a good Pyro is certainly within our means. A thriving Pyro would also give the Social Techies an outlet, since presumably dropping a line once in a while is not beyond their capacity. I guess I'm saying we don't need rules and structure, we need more socializing and communication between the various GT members and "doers" before a strong organization like a club will work.

I gotta go now; I hope I see you at Confusion (jeez, that's just a couple of weeks away...)

THERE'S GOLD IN THEM THERE ARCHES
(or at least a steady paycheck)

A zine for Apa-Tech # 39, written by Donna Proni, at 530 W. Walnut,
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Yes, I'm once again working at McDonalds. The most that I expect to get out of it is a steady flow of money while I'm there, and a good local reference when I leave. Contrary to what people tell me "everyone" does, I can't put Isher Artifacts down as a reference and then sit at home so I can answer the phone and tell someone what a wonderful employee I've been for the company. Maybe I'm too modest, or maybe I have a bad self image, but I just can't see myself talking to a prospective employer and extolling my own virtues in the guise of a previous employer.

Mailing Comments on Apa-Tech # 38

Lasergram - Dave - I'm glad to hear that you want the apa to survive - I hope you'll keep up the contributions.//How's the new job?

Transporter Topics - Rod - Other than your dental problems, it sounds like you had a really nice vacation.//re the generic cover - if I don't get any covers from you folks, that's what I'll use.

Dr. Gonzo's - Valli - re yr ct Roxanne - believe me I've already considered the problem of Ishercon with kids, so I won't get too hyper about you're mentioning it. Since Tullio and I are planning on having kids, it does seem awfully close.

Travels in Known Space - Bonnie - Now that you have top secret clearance, will that help you to get a job when you finish school? Does it stay active forever, or is there a limit on how long it lasts?

More Ravings - Roxanne - re yr ct # 37 being thinner than you expected - aside from that issue, we seem to be on an uphill climb in regard to the number of pages. I think some people were confused about the deadline, and it was summer, with worldcon right around the corner.//re yr story from the Apa-Tech map - we also have around here

somewhere a list of puns that didn't make it onto the final copy because of space, or they weren't funny enough (in Tullio's opinion).

Amorphous Abstractions - Guy - In the future try to leave a little more margin on the side that gets stapled so that it's easier to read.//re yr ct Rod - we have had many blaster control discussions in this apa - but why not gun control as well?

Mostly About Houses - Rolf - Do you actually send out invitations for your Thanksgiving in July, or is it a "if you know about it, you're invited" proposition.//Sorry Mary couldn't make it to Ishercon this year.//re "The Black Cauldron" - I did the same as you and read the books after the movie. The only thing that bothers me is that I had the movie "gurgi" in my mind, and I'm not sure that he would have had the same personality if I had just read the books without seeing the movie. (I have the same problem with "The Princess Bride" - since the first time I "read" it was when Marty read us a chapter after dinner each night, when I reread it now, I hear the voices he gave to Fezzik and Inigo.

The Modem is Mightier - Dean - Have I ever met you? Am I likely to in the near future (Confederation?)?//What is this fixation people seem to have regarding what "belongs" in the apa? I don't like the title of editor because I don't edit anything - whatever you want to put in here is what belongs.

Fruit of the Anomaly Tree - Greg - Any more news on Pyro?//re yr ct GTB - Hugh claims that if the apa came out more frequently, he would write more frequently. As it is now, he feels that anything that he writes is old news by the time you read it, and it becomes ancient history by the time he reads your comments on it.

Equatorial Epistle - Guy - People don't really think that's what America is like - do they!?!

That's all for now. See you at Confusion -

-Donna